

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MOGADISCIO 841 ACTION SECSTATE APR 18

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOGADISCIO 0841

DEPT ALSO PASS HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, SO, ET

SUBJ: REPORTS OF CONTINUED CONFLICT IN OGADEN AND OTHER ETHIOPIAN
PROVINCES.

1.

1. DANAB, THE DAILY BULLETIN OF "SOMALI LIBERATION FRONT"
HAS CONTINUED TO REPORT FIGHTING IN THE OGADEN AND THE SOUTHERN
ETHIOPIAN PROVINCES OF BALE AND SIDAMO. MOST OF THE INCIDENTS
REPORTED ARE ACTIONS CLAIMED BY THE "SOMALI ABO LIBERATION
FRONT".

2. THE "SOMALI ABO LIBERATION FRONT" HAS CLAIMED RECENTLY TO
HAVE MADE A NUMBER OF RAIDS, INCLUDING:

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-- ACTION ON APRIL 9 BETWEEN SIDAMO AND MASNO DISTRICT OF BALE
RESULTING IN AN ALLEGED 80 ENEMY KILLED AND 150 WOUNDED.

-- ACTION ON APRIL 10 AND 11, AT DODOLA DISTRICT, BALE,
RESULTING IN AN ALLEGED 100 ENEMY AND 150 "OTHERS" KILLED.

-- APRIL 13, AT DODOGALE, BALE, RESULTING IN AN ALLEGED 98

KILLED AND MORE THAN 150 WOUNDED.

-- SOMETIME LAST WEEK, IN BALE PROVINCE AROUND THE TOWNS OF HERARU AND HADABAADUDU, RESULTING IN AN ALLEGED 200 SOLDIERS KILLED.

-- NO DATE GIVEN, IN SIDAMO PROVINCE CLOSE TO MOYALE, A GARRISON ATTACKED, ALLEGEDLY 15 KILLED.

IN ALL THESE INSTANCES THE SALF CLAIMED THAT THE GUERILLAS GOT AWAY, BUT THAT IN SOME INSTANCES THE LOCAL POPULATION WAS SUBJECTED TO REPRISALS.

3. DANAB ALSO REPORTED CONTINUED SKIRMISHING IN THE OGADEN. THE WSLF CLAIMED TO HAVE TAKEN TWO ACTIONS ON APRIL 11. ONE, SOUTHWEST OF JIGJIGA BETWEEN THE TOWNS OF FIIQ AND SAGAG ALLEGEDLY RESULTED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF TWO TRUCKS AND THE KILLING OF 128 PASSENGERS. THE OTHER CLAIMED WAS THE AMBUSH AND BLOWING UP OF A BUS 15 KMS NORTH OF JIGJIGA BETWEEN THE VILLAGES OF JAARE AND NARAGEL WITH 23 ABOARD.

4. WE ARE UNABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE ANY OF THE "LIBERATION FRONT" CLAIMS. WE ARE SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL, IF ONLY FOR THE REASON THAT IF THEY HAVE IN FACT INFLICTED MORE THAN 800 MILITARY AND NON-MILITARY DEATHS PLUS HUNDREDS OF OTHERS WOUNDED IN THE LAST THREE WEEKS, WE BELIEVE THE OUTCRY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FROM THE ETHIOPIANS WOULD HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIAL. IF THE FRONTS ARE MERELY WHISTLING IN THE DARK TO KEEP UP MORALE OR PROVE THE POINT THAT RESISTANCE WOULD CONTINUE EVEN IF THE GSDR WITHDREW ITS REGULAR FORCES, THEN THE FRONTS ARE PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME. THEIR CLAIMS IN ANY CASE CAN SERVE AS A PRETEXT FOR ETHIOPIAN RETALIATORY ACTION, AGAINST THE SOMALI OR GALLA POPULATION IN THE AREA, OR AGAINST TARGETS IN SOMALIA PROPER. WHAT DOES STRIKE US AS INTERESTING, IF NOT SIGNIFICANT, IS THE FACT THAT THE FRONTS ARE NOW MAKING SUCH PRECISE DATED CLAIMS, NOT AT ALL THEIR PATTERN DURING THE CONVENTIONAL MILITARY CAMPAIGN IN "WESTERN SOMALIA". FOR THE GSDR THESE REPORTS ALSO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPEAT EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AND SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENT MOVEMENTS AND DENUNCIATIONS OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT. WE THINK IT IS A SITUATION THAT BEARS WATCHING, AND WOULD WELCOME ANY CLARIFYING COMMENT EITHER NAIROBI OR ADDIS ABABA CAN ADD. LOUGHRAN. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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